

Sensitive to future: the case of Japanese *nara*-conditionals

Muyi Yang

University of Connecticut
muyi.yang@uconn.edu

November 14, 2021
LENLS 18

Factual conditionals (Iatridou 1991)

Factual conditionals (Iatridou 1991)

Antecedents have been mentioned in the preceding discourse:

Factual conditionals (Iatridou 1991)

Antecedents have been mentioned in the preceding discourse:

(1) A: Bill is very unhappy here.

B: If he is so unhappy, he should leave.

(Iatridou 1991: 56 (20))

Factual conditionals (Iatridou 1991)

Antecedents have been mentioned in the preceding discourse:

(1) A: Bill is very unhappy here.

B: If he is so unhappy, he should leave.

(Iatridou 1991: 56 (20))

In English, factual conditionals and regular hypothetical conditionals can both be expressed by *if*-constructions.

Japanese has a number of conditional connectives:

Japanese has a number of conditional connectives:

- (2) *Mary-ga {kuru nara / ki-tara / ku-reba / kuru to}, John-mo kuru.*
Mary-nom come nara come-tara come-ba come to John-also come
'If Mary comes, John also comes.'

Japanese has a number of conditional connectives:

- (2) *Mary-ga {kuru nara / ki-tara / ku-reba / kuru to}, John-mo kuru.*
Mary-nom come nara come-tara come-ba come to John-also come
'If Mary comes, John also comes.'

Only *nara* is acceptable in factual conditionals:

Japanese has a number of conditional connectives:

- (2) *Mary-ga {kuru nara / ki-tara / ku-reba / kuru to}, John-mo kuru.*
Mary-nom come nara come-tara come-ba come to John-also come
'If Mary comes, John also comes.'

Only *nara* is acceptable in factual conditionals:

- (3) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.
B: *kimi-ga {iku nara / #it-tara / #ik-eba / #iku to}, boku-mo iku*
you-nom go nara go-tara go-ba go to I-add go
yo.
sfp
'If you're going, I'm going, too.'
- (Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)

Japanese has a number of conditional connectives:

- (2) *Mary-ga {kuru nara / ki-tara / ku-reba / kuru to}, John-mo kuru.*
Mary-nom come nara come-tara come-ba come to John-also come
'If Mary comes, John also comes.'

Only *nara* is acceptable in factual conditionals:

- (3) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.
B: *kimi-ga {iku nara / #it-tara / #ik-eba / #iku to}, boku-mo iku*
you-nom go nara go-tara go-ba go to I-add go
yo.
sfp
'If you're going, I'm going, too.'
- (Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)

Akatsuka (1985): *nara*-antecedents often express 'newly acquired information'.

Today's goal

The felicity conditions of *nara*-conditionals

Today's goal

The felicity conditions of *nara*-conditionals

Roadmap

Today's goal

The felicity conditions of *nara*-conditionals

Roadmap

- Discourse properties of *nara*-conditionals;

The felicity conditions of *nara*-conditionals

Roadmap

- Discourse properties of *nara*-conditionals;
- Implementation within Farkas and Bruce (2010)'s Table model;

The felicity conditions of *nara*-conditionals

Roadmap

- Discourse properties of *nara*-conditionals;
- Implementation within Farkas and Bruce (2010)'s Table model;

Upshot: *nara*-conditionals are **sensitive to what the context could possibly look like at some point of the conversation in the future.**

Discourse properties of *nara*

Out-of-the-blue contexts

Out-of-the-blue contexts

If a *nara*-conditional is discourse-initial, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

Out-of-the-blue contexts

If a *nara*-conditional is discourse-initial, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

[You arrive at a new campus and are lost on your way to the semester orientation. To a stranger...]

(4) *sumimasen...*

sorry

#moshi ima nyuugakushiki-no kaijou-ni ikareteiru nara, basho-o
supposedly now orientation-gen venue-dat going nara place-acc

oshiete itadake-mas-en ka?

teach give-pol-neg q

'Excuse me. If you're going to the orientation, could you tell me where it is?'

Out-of-the-blue contexts

If a *nara*-conditional is discourse-initial, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

[You arrive at a new campus and are lost on your way to the semester orientation. To a stranger...]

(4) *sumimasen...*

sorry

#moshi ima nyuugakushiki-no kaijou-ni ikareteiru nara, basho-o
supposedly now orientation-gen venue-dat going nara place-acc

oshiete itadake-mas-en ka?

teach give-pol-neg q

'Excuse me. If you're going to the orientation, could you tell me where it is?'

Note: Replacing *nara* with *tara* would make the sentence felicitous.

With speaker commitment to the antecedent

With speaker commitment to the antecedent

If the speaker commits to the antecedent, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

With speaker commitment to the antecedent

If the speaker commits to the antecedent, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

(5) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.

B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
#I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

With speaker commitment to the antecedent

If the speaker commits to the antecedent, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

(5) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.

B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
#I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

B': *souna no?* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
that fin she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
Is that so? If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

With speaker commitment to the antecedent

If the speaker commits to the antecedent, the antecedent doesn't express newly acquired info.

(5) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.

B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
#I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

B': *souna no?* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
that fin she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
Is that so? If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

Note: Other conditionals (e.g. English *if*, Japanese *tara*) are also not allowed with 'I know!'.

Problematic case for Akatsuka's view: After questions

Problematic case for Akatsuka's view: After questions

(6) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga aru.*
know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom be
'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'

Problematic case for Akatsuka's view: After questions

(6) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga aru.*
know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom be
'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'

The antecedent does not express newly acquired info, but *nara* is felicitous.

Interim summary

1. *nara*-conditionals are felicitous
 - after assertions
 - after questions
2. *nara*-conditionals are infelicitous
 - in out-of-the-blue contexts
3. conditionals (including *nara*-conditionals) are infelicitous
 - with speaker commitments to the antecedent

(cf. paper for constraint regarding direct evidence for the antecedent)

Assumed Table model (Farkas & Bruce 2010)

A context $c = \langle \text{Table}, \text{CS}, \text{Fut-CS}, \text{Temp-CS} \rangle$

Table:

Context set (CS):

Future context set (Fut-CS):

Temporary context set (Temp-CS):

A context $c = \langle \text{Table}, \text{CS}, \text{Fut-CS}, \text{Temp-CS} \rangle$

Table: a stack of sets of propositions,

- records what has been proposed in the discourse so far;

Context set (CS):

Future context set (Fut-CS):

Temporary context set (Temp-CS):

A context $c = \langle \text{Table}, \text{CS}, \text{Fut-CS}, \text{Temp-CS} \rangle$

Table: a stack of sets of propositions,

- records what has been proposed in the discourse so far;

Context set (CS): a set of worlds

- represents the mutual joint beliefs of the interlocutors (cf. Stalnaker 1978)

Future context set (Fut-CS):

Temporary context set (Temp-CS):

A context $c = \langle \mathbf{Table}, \mathbf{CS}, \mathbf{Fut-CS}, \mathbf{Temp-CS} \rangle$

Table: a stack of sets of propositions,

- records what has been proposed in the discourse so far;

Context set (CS): a set of worlds

- represents the mutual joint beliefs of the interlocutors (cf. Stalnaker 1978)

Future context set (Fut-CS):

- represents what **CS** could look like once the issues on **Table** are settled

Temporary context set (Temp-CS):

A context $c = \langle \mathbf{Table}, \mathbf{CS}, \mathbf{Fut-CS}, \mathbf{Temp-CS} \rangle$

Table: a stack of sets of propositions,

- records what has been proposed in the discourse so far;

Context set (CS): a set of worlds

- represents the mutual joint beliefs of the interlocutors (cf. Stalnaker 1978)

Future context set (Fut-CS):

- represents what **CS** could look like once the issues on **Table** are settled

Temporary context set (Temp-CS): a copy of **CS**

- reserved for the interpretation of conditionals (cf. Kaufmann 2000)

A context $c = \langle \mathbf{Table}, \mathbf{CS}, \mathbf{Fut-CS}, \mathbf{Temp-CS} \rangle$

Table: a stack of sets of propositions,

- records what has been proposed in the discourse so far;

Context set (CS): a set of worlds

- represents the mutual joint beliefs of the interlocutors (cf. Stalnaker 1978)

Future context set (Fut-CS):

- represents what **CS** could look like once the issues on **Table** are settled

Temporary context set (Temp-CS): a copy of **CS**

- reserved for the interpretation of conditionals (cf. Kaufmann 2000)

Speech acts are functions from input to output contexts.

Illustration 1: Assertions

Illustration 1: Assertions

An assertion is a **proposal to update the context set**

Illustration 1: Assertions

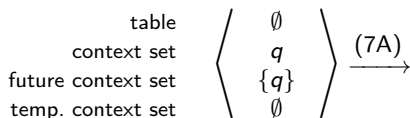
An assertion is a **proposal to update the context set**

(7) A: Mary is going to the LSA.

Illustration 1: Assertions

An assertion is a **proposal to update the context set**

(7) A: Mary is going to the LSA.



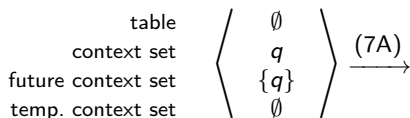
Note: When Table is empty, the actual context set is projected as the future context set (Farkas and Bruce 2010)

Illustration 1: Assertions

An assertion is a **proposal to update the context set**

- Add the set of the proposition to the top of the Table

(7) A: Mary is going to the LSA.



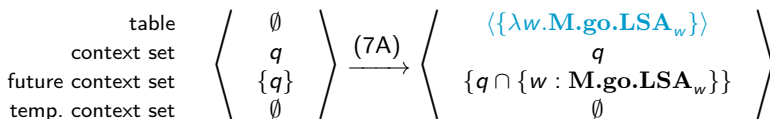
Note: When Table is empty, the actual context set is projected as the future context set (Farkas and Bruce 2010)

Illustration 1: Assertions

An assertion is a **proposal to update the context set**

- Add the set of the proposition to the top of the Table

(7) A: Mary is going to the LSA.



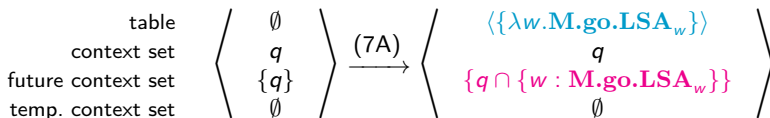
Note: When Table is empty, the actual context set is projected as the future context set (Farkas and Bruce 2010)

Illustration 1: Assertions

An assertion is a **proposal to update the context set**

- Add the set of the proposition to the top of the Table
- Project a future context set where the proposition holds

(7) A: Mary is going to the LSA.



Note: When Table is empty, the actual context set is projected as the future context set (Farkas and Bruce 2010)

Resolving the proposal by acceptance:

(8) A: Mary is going to the LSA.

Resolving the proposal by acceptance:

- (8) A: Mary is going to the LSA.
B: Yes, she is.

Resolving the proposal by acceptance:

- (8) A: Mary is going to the LSA.
B: Yes, she is.

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{table} \\ \text{cs} \\ \text{fut. cs} \\ \text{temp. cs} \end{array} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\} \rangle \\ q \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\}\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(8B)}$$

Resolving the proposal by acceptance:

- (8) A: Mary is going to the LSA.
B: Yes, she is.

■ Remove the issue from the table

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{table} \\ \text{cs} \\ \text{fut. cs} \\ \text{temp. cs} \end{array} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\} \rangle \\ q \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\}\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(8B)} \rightarrow$$

Resolving the proposal by acceptance:

- (8) A: Mary is going to the LSA.
B: Yes, she is.

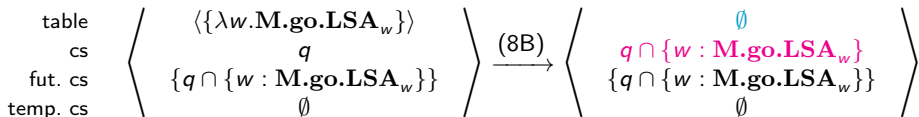
■ Remove the issue from the table

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{table} \\ \text{cs} \\ \text{fut. cs} \\ \text{temp. cs} \end{array} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\} \rangle \\ q \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\}\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(8B)} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \emptyset \\ q \cap \{w : \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\} \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{M.go.LSA}_w\}\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle$$

Resolving the proposal by acceptance:

- (8) A: Mary is going to the LSA.
 B: Yes, she is.

- Remove the issue from the table
- Replace the actual context set with the projected future context set



Overall effect of the conversation: elimination of $\neg \mathbf{M.go.LSA}$ -worlds from context set

Illustration 2: Questions

A question is a **proposal to update the context set with one of its answers**

Illustration 2: Questions

A question is a **proposal to update the context set with one of its answers**

(9) A: Where's the professor?

Illustration 2: Questions

A question is a **proposal to update the context set with one of its answers**

(9) A: Where's the professor?

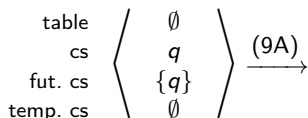


Illustration 2: Questions

A question is a **proposal to update the context set with one of its answers**

- Add the denotation of the question to the top of the Table

(9) A: Where's the professor?

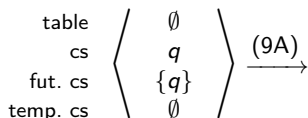


Illustration 2: Questions

A question is a **proposal to update the context set with one of its answers**

- Add the denotation of the question to the top of the Table

(9) A: Where's the professor?

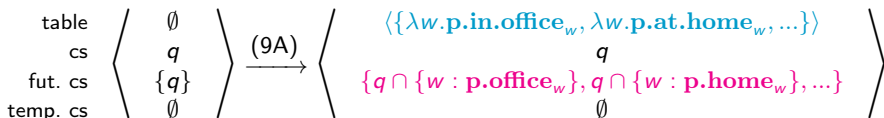
$$\begin{array}{l} \text{table} \\ \text{cs} \\ \text{fut. cs} \\ \text{temp. cs} \end{array} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \emptyset \\ q \\ \{q\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(9A)} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{p.in.office}_w, \lambda w. \mathbf{p.at.home}_w, \dots\} \rangle \\ q \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.office}_w\}, q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.home}_w\}, \dots\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle$$

Illustration 2: Questions

A question is a **proposal to update the context set with one of its answers**

- Add the denotation of the question to the top of the Table
- Project a set of future context sets where one of the possible answers hold

(9) A: Where's the professor?



Resolving the proposal with an answer:

(10) A: Where's the professor?

Resolving the proposal with an answer:

- (10) A: Where's the professor?
B: She's in the office.

Resolving the proposal with an answer:

- (10) A: Where's the professor?
B: She's in the office.

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{table} \\ \text{cs} \\ \text{fut. cs} \\ \text{temp. cs} \end{array} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{p.office}_w, \dots\} \rangle \\ q \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.office}_w\}, \dots\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(10B)}$$

Resolving the proposal with an answer:

- (10) A: Where's the professor?
B: She's in the office.

■ Remove the issue from the table

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{table} \\ \text{cs} \\ \text{fut. cs} \\ \text{temp. cs} \end{array} \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{p.office}_w, \dots\} \rangle \\ q \\ \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.office}_w\}, \dots\} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(10B)} \rightarrow$$

Resolving the proposal with an answer:

- (10) A: Where's the professor?
 B: She's in the office.

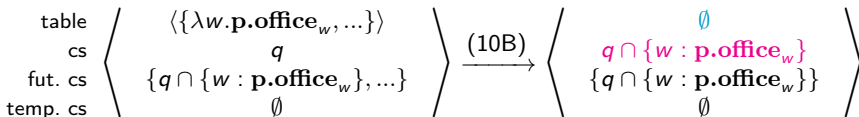
■ Remove the issue from the table

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{table} \\
 \text{cs} \\
 \text{fut. cs} \\
 \text{temp. cs}
 \end{array}
 \left\langle \begin{array}{c}
 \langle \{\lambda w. \mathbf{p.office}_w, \dots\} \rangle \\
 q \\
 \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.office}_w\}, \dots\} \\
 \emptyset
 \end{array} \right\rangle \xrightarrow{(10B)} \left\langle \begin{array}{c}
 \emptyset \\
 q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.office}_w\} \\
 \{q \cap \{w : \mathbf{p.office}_w\}\} \\
 \emptyset
 \end{array} \right\rangle$$

Resolving the proposal with an answer:

- (10) A: Where's the professor?
 B: She's in the office.

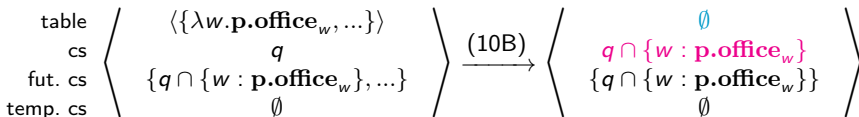
- Remove the issue from the table
- Pick out the relevant future context set and make it the actual context set



Resolving the proposal with an answer:

- (10) A: Where's the professor?
 B: She's in the office.

- Remove the issue from the table
- Pick out the relevant future context set and make it the actual context set



Overall effect of the conversation: elimination of $\neg \mathbf{p.in.office}$ -worlds from context set

Proposal

Conditional connectives restrict **temporary CS** to antecedent-worlds:

Conditional connectives restrict **temporary CS** to antecedent-worlds:

$$(11) \quad \llbracket tara \rrbracket(p) = \llbracket nara \rrbracket(p) = \lambda c. \langle \mathbf{Table}_c, \mathbf{CS}_c, \mathbf{Fut-CS}_c, \mathbf{CS}_c \cap p \rangle$$

Conditional connectives restrict **temporary CS** to antecedent-worlds:

$$(11) \quad \llbracket tara \rrbracket(p) = \llbracket nara \rrbracket(p) = \lambda c. \langle \mathbf{Table}_c, \mathbf{CS}_c, \mathbf{Fut-CS}_c, \mathbf{CS}_c \cap p \rangle$$

Two definedness conditions

- **General condition for all conditional connectives:**

- **Specific condition for *nara*:**

Conditional connectives restrict **temporary CS** to antecedent-worlds:

$$(11) \quad \llbracket tara \rrbracket(p) = \llbracket nara \rrbracket(p) = \lambda c. \langle \mathbf{Table}_c, \underbrace{\mathbf{CS}_c}_{\text{general condition}}, \mathbf{Fut-CS}_c, \mathbf{CS}_c \cap p \rangle$$

Two definedness conditions

- **General condition for all conditional connectives:**

Context set must not entail p

(cf. Akatsuka 1985, 1986; Iatridou 1991; Pesetsky 2018)

- **Specific condition for *nara*:**

Conditional connectives restrict **temporary CS** to antecedent-worlds:

$$(11) \quad \llbracket tara \rrbracket(p) = \llbracket nara \rrbracket(p) = \lambda c. \langle \mathbf{Table}_c, \underbrace{\mathbf{CS}_c}_{\text{general condition}}, \underbrace{\mathbf{Fut-CS}_c}_{\text{specific condition}}, \mathbf{CS}_c \cap p \rangle$$

Two definedness conditions

- **General condition for all conditional connectives:**

Context set must not entail p

(cf. Akatsuka 1985, 1986; Iatridou 1991; Pesetsky 2018)

- **Specific condition for *nara*:**

There must be a future CS where p holds

Predictions: After assertions (factual conditionals)

(12) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.

B: *kimi-ga iku nara, boku-mo iku yo.*

you-nom go nara I-add go sfp

'If you're going, I'm going, too.'

(Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)

Predictions: After assertions (factual conditionals)

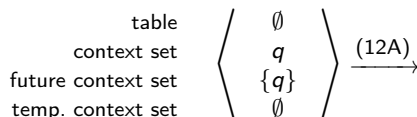
(12) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.

B: *kimi-ga iku nara, boku-mo iku yo.*

you-nom go nara I-add go sfp

'If you're going, I'm going, too.'

(Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)



Predictions: After assertions (factual conditionals)

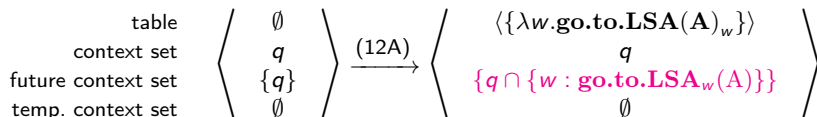
(12) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.

B: *kimi-ga iku nara, boku-mo iku yo.*

you-nom go nara I-add go sfp

'If you're going, I'm going, too.'

(Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)



Predictions: After assertions (factual conditionals)

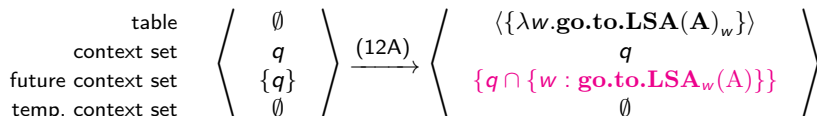
(12) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.

B: *kimi-ga iku nara, boku-mo iku yo.*

you-nom go nara I-add go sfp

'If you're going, I'm going, too.'

(Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)



The context of (12B) has a future CS where speaker A goes to LSA.

Predictions: After assertions (factual conditionals)

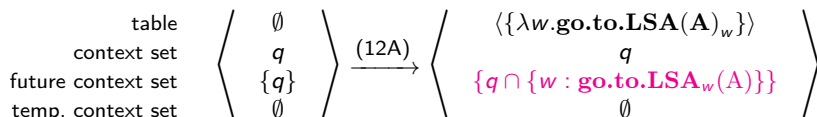
(12) A: I have decided to go to the winter LSA.

B: *kimi-ga iku nara, boku-mo iku yo.*

you-nom go nara I-add go sfp

'If you're going, I'm going, too.'

(Adapted from Akatsuka 1985: 629)



The context of (12B) has a future CS where speaker A goes to LSA.

So, *nara*'s specific condition is satisfied.

Predictions: Out-of-the-blue contexts

[You arrive at a new campus and are lost on your way to the semester orientation. To a stranger...]

(13) *sumimasen...*

sorry

#moshi ima nyuugakushiki-no kaijou-ni ikareteiru nara, basho-o
supposedly now orientation-gen venue-dat going nara place-acc
oshiete itadake-mas-en ka?

teach give-pol-neg q

'Excuse me. If you're going to the orientation, could you tell me where it is?'

Predictions: Out-of-the-blue contexts

[You arrive at a new campus and are lost on your way to the semester orientation. To a stranger...]

(13) *sumimasen...*

sorry

#moshi ima nyuugakushiki-no kaijou-ni ikareteiru nara, basho-o
supposedly now orientation-gen venue-dat going nara place-acc
oshiete itadake-mas-en ka?

teach give-pol-neg q

'Excuse me. If you're going to the orientation, could you tell me where it is?'

The context doesn't have future CS where the addressee is going to the orientation.

Predictions: Out-of-the-blue contexts

[You arrive at a new campus and are lost on your way to the semester orientation. To a stranger...]

(13) *sumimasen...*

sorry

#moshi ima nyuugakushiki-no kaijou-ni ikareteiru nara, basho-o
supposedly now orientation-gen venue-dat going nara place-acc
oshiete itadake-mas-en ka?

teach give-pol-neg q

'Excuse me. If you're going to the orientation, could you tell me where it is?'

The context doesn't have future CS where the addressee is going to the orientation.

So, *nara's* specific condition is not satisfied.

Predictions: After questions

(14) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga*
know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom
aru.

be

'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'

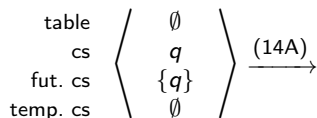
Predictions: After questions

(14) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga*
know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom
aru.

be

'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'



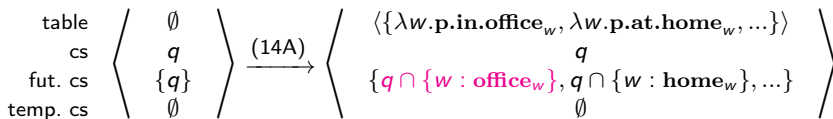
Predictions: After questions

(14) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga*
 know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom
aru.

be

'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'



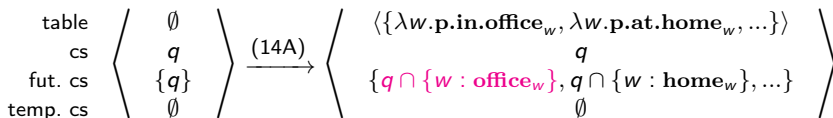
Predictions: After questions

(14) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga*
 know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom
aru.

be

'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'



The context of (14B) has a future CS where prof. is in the office.

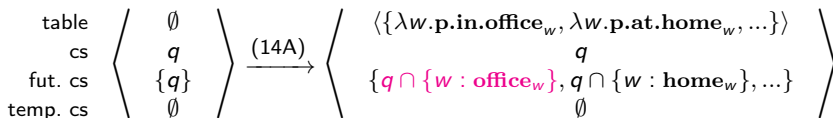
Predictions: After questions

(14) A: Where's the professor?

B: *wakar-anai kedo, ofisu-ni iru nara, boku-mo kiki-tai koto-ga*
 know-neg but office-dat be nara I-add ask-want thing-nom
aru.

be

'I don't know, but if she's in the office, I also have something to ask her.'



The context of (14B) has a future CS where prof. is in the office.

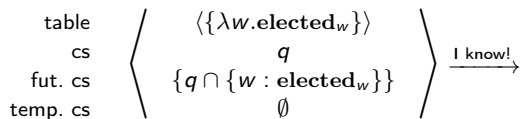
So, *nara's* specific condition is satisfied.

Predictions: With speaker commitment to the antecedent

- (15) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.
- B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
#I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

Predictions: With speaker commitment to the antecedent

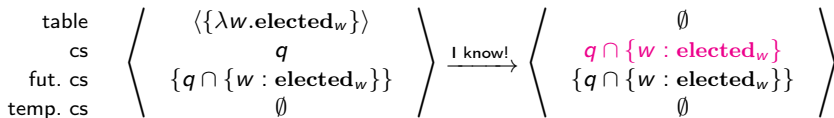
- (15) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.
B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
#I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.



Predictions: With speaker commitment to the antecedent

(15) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.

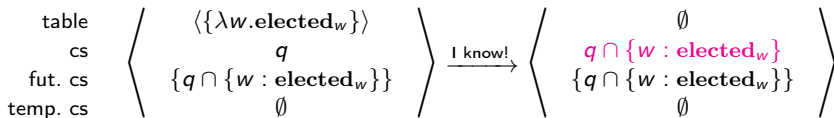
B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
 know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
 #I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.



Predictions: With speaker commitment to the antecedent

(15) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.

B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
 know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
 #I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

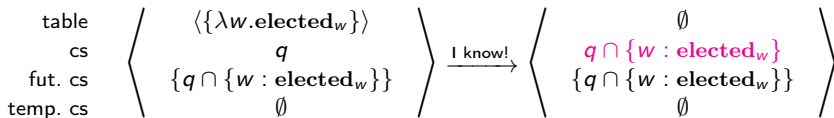


The context of the *nara*-conditional in (15B) has a CS where Mary was elected.

Predictions: With speaker commitment to the antecedent

(15) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.

B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
 know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
 #I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.

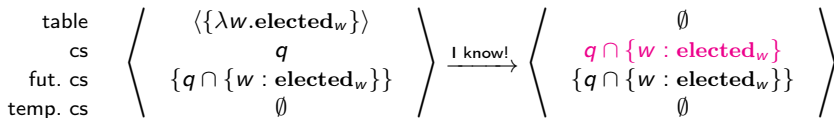


The context of the *nara*-conditional in (15B) has a CS where Mary was elected.

So, the general condition is not satisfied. (Note: *nara*'s specific condition is satisfied.)

Predictions: With speaker commitment to the antecedent

- (15) A: Mary was elected as the next department head.
 B: #*shit-te-ru yo!* *kanojo-ga era-bare-ta nara, iwatte age-you.*
 know sfp she-nom be.selected nara celebrate give-vol
 #I know! If she was elected, we should celebrate for her.



The context of the *nara*-conditional in (15B) has a CS where Mary was elected.

So, the general condition is not satisfied. (Note: *nara*'s specific condition is satisfied.)

This also correctly rules out the other conditional connectives (e.g. *tara*).

Conclusion

Two discourse constraints on conditionals

1. *nara*-conditionals are felicitous
 - after assertions
 - after questions
2. *nara*-conditionals are infelicitous
 - in out-of-the-blue contexts
3. conditionals (including *nara*) are infelicitous
 - with speaker commitments to the antecedent

Two discourse constraints on conditionals

1. *nara*-conditionals are felicitous ✓ by *nara*'s specific condition
 - after assertions
 - after questions
2. *nara*-conditionals are infelicitous ✓ by *nara*'s specific condition
 - in out-of-the-blue contexts
3. conditionals (including *nara*) are infelicitous
 - with speaker commitments to the antecedent

Two discourse constraints on conditionals

1. *nara*-conditionals are felicitous ✓ **by *nara*'s specific condition**
 - after assertions
 - after questions
2. *nara*-conditionals are infelicitous ✓ **by *nara*'s specific condition**
 - in out-of-the-blue contexts
3. conditionals (including *nara*) are infelicitous ✓ **by the general condition**
 - with speaker commitments to the antecedent

Remaining issues

1. Interaction with evidentials, imperatives, etc. (cf. paper)

Remaining issues

1. Interaction with evidentials, imperatives, etc. (cf. paper)
2. Interaction with discourse structure, e.g. question-answering strategies.
(cf. paper)

Remaining issues

1. Interaction with evidentials, imperatives, etc. (cf. paper)
2. Interaction with discourse structure, e.g. question-answering strategies.
(cf. paper)

(16) A: Will Nobita come tomorrow?

B: *SHizuka-ga kuru nara, Nobita-mo kuru to omo-imas-u kedo...*
Shizuka-nom come nara Nobita-add come c think-pol-npst but
'I think if Shizuka comes, Nobita will also come (at least)...'

Thank you!

This work was supported by NSF Award 2116972 'Research on conditional and modal language' (PI: Magdalena Kaufmann; co-PI: Stefan Kaufmann).

For discussions and comments, I am indebted to Magdalena Kaufmann, Teruyuki Mizuno, Stefan Kaufmann, Robin Jenkins, Si Kai Lee, Dilip Ninan, Yasutada Sudo, Yusuke Yagi, the audience at UConn Meaning Group (September 2021) and Semantics Workshop in Tokai and Kansai (September 2021), the anonymous reviewers of J/K 29 and LENLS 18. All errors are mine.

References I

- Akatsuka, N. (1985). Conditionals and the epistemic scale. *Language*, pages 625–639.
- Akatsuka, N. (1986). Conditionals are discourse-bound. *On conditionals*, 333:351.
- Farkas, D. F. and Bruce, K. B. (2010). On reacting to assertions and polar questions. *Journal of semantics*, 27(1):81–118.
- Iatridou, S. (1991). *Topics in conditionals*. PhD thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Kaufmann, S. (2000). Dynamic context management. *Formalizing the dynamics of information*, pages 171–188.
- Pesetsky, J. (2018). Factual conditionals and hypothetical commitments. Master's thesis, ILLC, Universiteit van Amsterdam.
- Stalnaker, R. C. (1978). Assertion. In *Context and Content*, pages 78–95. Oxford University Press.